each to be an expression of distinct thought and sentiment, the offspring of a truthful imitation of nature, and of pure creation in his own mind; and he should remember that great works need not be the only significant ones;—that the beautiful is not only unfettered to the style of any one age or country, but that it is not confined to any particular class of edifice.

Any materials he may obtain from ancient or foreign sources, or gather from other minds, through the medium of books or otherwise, he must, before applying, bring into his own mind, and subject to the operation of his own powers; that which has been merely appropriated by the hand and eye, which is not so digested, or that he cannot make to blend with the previous stores and images of his mind, he is not entitled to make use of, for it is not his.

Taste and judgment united to fertility of imagination, an eye practised to quick perception of the beautiful, and some artistic power of delineation, should, therefore, characterise the architect, who should also have a passionate love for the art, and consecrate to it all his powers. He must free his mind from prejudice, and look on nature with unscaled eyes, if he would fathom her mysteries of beauty, and discover the principles on which she produces her wonders of effect. They have no exaggerated idea, but true conceptions of the art, who look upon its professor as a poet. In a real piece of architecture the spirit of its author beams forth, as does the soul through the eyes of the body, and one source of pleasure with which we look upon such a work is the communion of mind with mind: enshrined in stone and wood, perchance, we discover a kindred spirit. As a work of art, it is the beaming of thought in the building that is to be prized, not the building itself, however rich its materials. The end and design of physical is moral beauty; and the secret of its effect upon us is its sympathy with something within. The soul of man is so connected with nature that every new phenomenon, whether of nature or art, excites a corresponding idea or feeling; this constitutes the charm in some pictures by the old masters, there is the beaming of a soul in their Madonnas and saints which transfixes the beholder, and on which one could look for hours and think for years.

This beauty is the highest food of the soul; a genuine perception of it has been termed the master key of the mind, and its effect thereon, whether beaming from external nature or through the medium of art, is inexpressible. Its agency is of the most subtle and spiritual nature. It tends silently to unfold the flowers of our existence, and the highest fruits of virtue are of its producing. It is the duty and the privilege of all to become acquainted with and to cultivate a love for the beautiful; to the artist it is peculiarly necessary. He must imbibe it in order to impart it; he must educate the eye and the inner sense, and strengthen the faculty of conception ere he can communicate it by embodying it in art.

If I am correct in my definition of beauty, truth of expression, or, in other words, consistency of character in building, is of infinitely more value than any other exterior quality, any unmeaning prettiness, that could be given in its absence. It has evidently been the sole aim in the exterior design of some public buildings, to render them an ornament to the neighbourhood by a superior style of decoration, heedless of the loud call of common sense, which dictates that, above all things, they should express their use, by having their exterior aspect in harmony with their destination. Their projectors have been forgetful of the indissoluble connection between beauty and truth; and that whatever charms a building so designed may possess in itself, to every well-formed mind it would have been infinitely more pleasing if distinguished by truth. Of this great error I could give numerous examples, and they are to be found chiefly among the erections of the last half century. One that will well illustrate this subject, may be seen in the Liverpool Infirmary (I choose examples from Liverpool merely for convenience). No stranger could suppose that building, with its chaste, cold colonnade, and harsh mural and fenestral character, to be an institution of benevolence, an asylum for the afflicted. It is in itself a respectable structure, worthy of the town, but without the least accord between its architectural character and the humane object of its foundation.

The same striking absence of fitness may be observed in another important building in the neighbourhood,—the prison at Kirkdale; from the front of which not the slightest intimation of its real purpose is conveyed to the spectator, who might easily mistake it, with its Ionic portico as its most prominent feature, and neatly dressed sash windows, for a nobleman's or gentleman's country seat. Certainly it betrays no symptom of the gaol; and a stranger might conclude, upon being told its real character, that it had been deemed necessary, for some reason, to disguise it. The true aim, I suspect, has been at a handsome and respectable character, forgetful that the art possesses the power to speak, and that dumbness is not a necessary deprivation in any building. The Liverpool Borough Gaol is, on the contrary, a building which broadly declares its office, of the ungracious nature of which none could remain in doubt for an instant; and is perhaps not inferior to Newgate, London, in this important particular.

These examples of vacant or erroneous expression are to be found, as I remarked before, chiefly among later erections: many of the old ones, in regard to this quality, are, on the contrary, objects of just admiration: some of the older institutions of London, and the older towns and cities, highly deemed of, and that many would gladly see replaced by very different erections, are gems in the eyes of all true judges. Hospitals of various kinds might be named, which, with scarce any pretensions to architectural character at all, have that hospitable, warm, and comfortable, yet withal dignified air and mien, which tell the observer what they are: there is a sympathy with suffering in their look; their very gateways shed a balm upon the mind; and though the softening and subduing hand of time is concerned in this effect, yet such are the powers of expression inherent in the art, that it could be given to any erection in the present day by an architect possessed of true poetic feeling,—that feeling which draws, like the Muses round Apollo, into one magic circle the whole of the fine arts.

But, whilst adapting architecture to every new circumstance, it must be borne in mind that it has principles which do not alter with these circumstances: through all circumstances of climate and material of construction, the great principles are the same. Architecture has true, invariable laws,—as fixed, as unchanging, as those of the physical creation from which they are derived; and, without obedience to these laws, we can no more produce a work that will answer the great ends of art, than we can maintain life and health whilst violating the organic laws of our being. What is chiefly to be kept in view is the exact value of precedent; and, to fix that in the mind, we must remember that it can only be recognized so far as it is acknowledged by nature,—so far as the rules it develops are tracable to that source. What we have to do is to penetrate into the spirit of the ancient masters, ascertain their meaning, and carry out their principles to new circumstances, under the same unerring guidance by which they themselves were led.

It should here be observed that I do not propose to confine the application of the antique elements within any particular limit of design. Such limit as Palladio, Vignola, or the Italians generally assigned themselves, for instance, I would not make the boundary of their modification for church and other purposes: the style might diverge from the trabeated system, and run into the Romanesque but in favour of Romanesque, or any other, I would not abandon our own beautiful styles. If two distinct systems were used (the Gothic and antique), I should not apprehend a want of harmony as the result, as feared by some. The classic styles are capable of a picturesque composition, and the infusion of sufficient of the vertical principle, to insure, while it presented greater variety, the needful harmony with the Gothic forms of surrounding buildings. The buildings of Vanbrugh would so harmonise, as well as do the Lombard churches with the street architecture of Italy. The horizontal and vertical systems have, both, their types in nature, and therefore their principles may be combined in a street, and they will harmonize with one another. A harmony will exist, in short, between buildings, in whatever style they are erected, if nature—that is to say, true principles of art — be followed.

Strict attention to those principles which are of eternal authority in architecture, involves no sacrifice of real beauty; and, on the other hand, what is really beautiful, that satisfies the eye of taste, may generally be defended when cited to the bar of rigid principle and judgment. A great deal has been written on the subject of modern architectural practice, of a nature tending greatly to cramp the art, and to exclude from the student many legitimate sources of variety and invention. The practice, for instance, of piling column upon column, along with many other very natural combinations of the classic features, has been condemned. Now, against two orders or heights of columns in a façade, there is no statute in the code of good taste. An objection, urged by a living writer, that it reminds one of the different stages of a temporary scaffolding, is futile. The Greeks did it in one instance, and there is nothing in the practice to lead us to suppose that they would not have resorted to it under the same circumstances which led the moderns to adopt it. I have no objection to what is called "purity of style;" that is to say, to the Greek elements being used in the same, or nearly the same relation, and fulfilling the same office they held in the ancient temple, when such can be done with propriety,—when such "purity" is not obtained to the exclusion of fitness and every life-giving quality. Pure, solemn Greek, such as the temples present, may serve for purposes of a kindred nature in England; but, assuredly, a Greek temple for municipal purposes, in the midst of a manufacturing town, is a solecism. I am not objecting to this purity; I am only recommending a purity of another and a higher kind; one not dreamt of in the philosophy of some,—a purity of *source*. With the greatest purity and truth of style a building may not be pure; the latter is mere purity of imitation. But art to be pure must draw from a pure source, through a pure channel. We want works based upon nature, and stamped in the mind of their author with his own image, and also the impress of the time and country. If each new age has not something new, something peculiar to itself, and beyond its predecessors to express in its works, human progress is but a dream. If to copy is the province of the architect, the imaginative powers, the faculties of genius, exist in vain; for in such labour they are not required.

But human progress is something more than a dream; and no just reason can be assigned why we should not, with all other votaries of art, in obedience to the law of progress, extend to the utmost our sphere of thought, and enrich the architecture of the day with fresh ideas and feelings. Our works *must* be an exponent of the age. The age should speak through them, and the religion, character, habits of the people, and spirit of the national institutions, should in them, as in a mirror, be manifested with undisguised truth. To mere fashion and whim we must allow no influence; but take especial care, under each circumstance, to preserve those great principles which are applicable to every condition, and to all styles of the art.

Forward! is the natural watchword of genius: the man who possesses that sublime gift is never satisfied with present attainment, nor reposes on past achievement. Contempt is, I believe, generally the strongest feeling in his mind for all his finished works,—conscious how far they fall short of uttering what is within, and, in his eagerness to attempt the untried, the unseen——

In concluding, I trust that no remarks I have made will be deemed an incitement to disobedience of just rule, or to contempt of all precedent. I would merely add one more voice to the loud call now making for freedom from unnatural shackles, and join with those who admonish the student to obey no rule but what can be traced to nature and judgment. I would not yield up the art to ill-guided and unrestrained powers of imagination. I would not undermine authority, but point out the true one.

SAMUEL HUGGINS.

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